

Come Follow Me Podcast
Elo Viz foundation production
Week 17
Ex 18-20

Hello, and welcome to the Come follow me Podcast. This week we are studying Exodus 18-20. There are 2 main principles that I would like to cover this week. The first is in chapter 19: the children of Israel have been traveling in the wilderness for a while and they come to a very important place; Mount Sinai. This must have been an incredible feeling for Moses after all that he had been through to bring his people, God's chosen people, to the place where he first received his call to lead the children of Israel out of captivity.

Once they get their camp set up at the base of the Mountain, Moses goes up the mountain to receive instruction from God. Then returns to the people and tells them all the wonderful things that God has in store for them. The most important thing is that God wants them to come and meet him. God is willing to show himself unto the children of Israel. Can you imagine if President Nelson said this to us just a few weeks ago at General conference: Chap 19 vs 10-11

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

What an exciting announcement! This is the purpose of the Prophets and Apostles, it's the purpose of our Bishops and Stake Presidents. To prepare the people to meet God. In my mind's eye I see them as pointers, as guides to lead us along the path to one day be ready to stand in the presents of the Father and the Son.

So, the people prepare, for 3 day they sanctify themselves. The emotions Moses must have been feeling was excitement and gratitude. This experience give them “belief in God forever” (Ex 19:9)

But there was a problem. The Children of Israel thought they had witnessed many mighty miracles and wonders including the parting of the red sea. They still lacked faith and experience. As God comes down a massive cloud of smoke covers the mountain and frightening earthquakes shook the ground around them. The people became terrified. As this Unique experience came closer to them they found themselves backing up away from the events. Crying out to Moses

“Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” (Ex 20: 19)

In other words they said to Moses, “We can't do this. You go to God and then come back and tell us what we said. We don't want to see him or hear him. We just want you to tell us what to do”

This must have been devastating to Moses... how tragic that the people he loved didn't want to experience those marvelous things that he had experienced.

Perhaps we can learn from these events, perhaps we can recognize these experiences that come into our lives and we can stand in faith and not shy or shrink away from the blessings that God has in store for us as we exercise faith in Him and his Precious Son.

The second lesson we can learn from these chapters and read the 10 commandments that God gives in Chapter 20 is how the purpose of the Law is to teach us to distinguish the differences between that which is holy and that which is unholy.

It's important to understand why God gave them these Commandments. These were his chosen people and he was leading them to his Promised land. A land that would be a blessing to his chosen people as they lived his commandments. This promised land is a place where the people would live in peace and protection, giving them the opportunity to focus on the important things of life which is a growth in the Gospel teaching them line upon line and precept upon precept until they receive a fullness of the Gospel and a sincere personal relationship with God the Father and his Holy Son. Israel's possession and enjoyment of the promised land depended upon their keeping the Law.

The law however was never meant to be the means of saving the people! This principle is not well understood in the church, And great number that are inactive made that choice based on a misunderstanding of the laws that God has given.

The law will never secure your salvation. You can not keep the law and be counted righteous in God's sight, that is not why the law was given.

Listen to Paul's powerful words to the Galatians about this purpose of the law (Galatians 2:16)

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

Similarly to the Romans he wrote: (Romans 3:20)

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”

That is an interesting statement that teaches a great deal “the law is the knowledge of sin” Here are 2 examples that will help illustrate Paul's teaching.

The Law is a mirror: If your face is dirty and you walk by a mirror the mirror will tell you that your face is dirty, You wouldn't take the mirror and try and clean your face with it would you? You would use other tools and then go back to the mirror to see if you were able to clean your face but the purpose of the mirror is singular, to show you what you currently are.

Likewise the law is like a bathroom scale: When you step on that scale you may look at it and say: oh, wow. I need to make some changes in my life, that you still need to do some work in your life. It may cause you to change the way you think or believe as you see the info that the scale provides you. But the scale will not make those changes for you. The scale will not give

you a plan to follow or give you the encouragement to do the work. It simply provides you with a look at your current condition.

The laws of God are to tell us how far we have fallen. In Galatians 3:2 Paul asks a rhetorical question: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

What he is saying is that we don't acquire more faith by keeping more laws but by learning about and having more experiences with God.

Galatians 3:24-25 Paul says: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Keeping the laws of God allows us to have peace and prosperity in our lives AND It tells us that we need the Savior! Because we have fallen short of the righteous standards of God, we need Jesus. We are lost without him.

So we come to God in humility and say "Father, I have tried to save my self by keeping the law and I have failed, So I come to you and ask if the name of Jesus to save me, to forgive me"

This is exactly what Lehi saw in his vision of the tree of life, there were 2 kinds of people: The first group in 1 Nephi 8:24-26 is described as "clinging" to the rod of iron. The dictionary renders a definition of clinging as to "hold tight to" these people as you know were ashamed after they were mocked by those in the great and spacious building. And they fell away. These are the people and are trying to save themselves through the law of God.

The second group in vs 30 are described as "holding fast" to the rod of iron. This dictionary definition is to "remain tightly secured". These people understood that without the rod they would never make it to the tree on their own. But the rod wasn't the destination thvc e Tree was. Its the Tree that provided the fruit.

The Law, or the Rod or the scriptures lead us to faith. Faith leads us to Jesus. Jesus then guides us by the spirit. Once we receive the spirit that is our guide. The spirit will then lead us instead of the law.

It is my prayer that we can use the Law for the purpose it was given to show us of our helpless standing before God, and our eternal need for this Sacrificial Son even the Lord Jesus Christ. In him we are forever dependent on for our salvation.

In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, Amen.